



# ZIONSVILLE

## PARKS & RECREATION

GET UP. GET OUT. GO PLAY!

## Park Places

## Winter Issue

In This Issue

### Another Exciting Grant Project Kicks Off 2016

By Matthew Dickey

Superintendent of Parks and Recreation

If you follow the Zionsville Parks & Recreation news in the media you may have some idea of a surprise grant we were awarded late in 2015. It is for a community-wide, comprehensive Pedestrian and Bicycle Trail System planning effort. These funds are administered through a division within the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH). By most national measures, Indiana generally ranks no higher than 40<sup>th</sup> on lists of the healthiest states, so the ISDH is highly motivated to address this situation.

Additionally, in almost every state-wide survey of residents' activities; walking for fitness, pleasure, errands etc. is usually the most pursued leisure activity. Bicycling is usually the second or third most pursued activity among residents. So the ISDH's grant program assists communities by helping fund trail planning, which then promotes more trail development.

The irony is the Parks Department originally applied in 2014, and we were told in January, 2015 that we just missed being successful. ISDH typically can only fund two projects each year. We were edged out by two smaller communities in the State, Bedford and Madison.

Months later, ISDH staff contacted us. They had found and amassed smaller amounts of money from across their end-of-year budget. There were enough funds to add an additional grant to Zionsville Parks!

So keep your eyes peeled and your ears open for more about this community-wide trail planning process. Starting early next year, there will be multiple opportunities and methods for you to participate; providing input and helping shape the way our community will develop over the next decade or more. And we'll all have the opportunity to get healthier as a happy byproduct of our efforts!



#### Winter Nature Camp at Nature Center

Who said nature camp only happens during summer break?



#### Zions Nature Center - Focus on Future

2016 Bicentennial will focus on children and conservation across the state.



#### Your Backyard: Creekside Nature Park

A small nature park, with plenty of opportunities for exploration.

# Zion Nature Center - Focus on Future

By Mindy Murdock

The New Year is fast approaching! Zionsville parks continue to focus on offering new programming, exhibits at the Zion Nature Center, and evaluating and exploring ways to better serve our visitors. The New Year (2016) also marks Indiana's Bicentennial celebration, an opportunity to honor our state's 200 years of history, and leave a lasting legacy for future generations. Many of the projects and programs across the state will focus on our children and conserving our Indiana heritage. We want to take this time to highlight one of those programs that I can say Zion Nature Center is a proud member of, the Bicentennial Nature Center Network.

The Bicentennial Nature Center Network is a coalition of Indiana nature centers that exists to teach all Hoosier children about conservation by providing high quality, hands-on environmental education.

## Goals of the Network:

- To celebrate Indiana's bicentennial in 2016 and beyond by collaborating together on projects that will empower children and youth to care about their own backyard through creative, hands-on experiences.
- To teach shared curriculum that focuses on the principles of land conservation to children and youth K-12.
- To strengthen our relationships with schools and teachers by providing them with more resources that allows their students to learn by increased contact with the outdoors.
- To share resources such as curriculum, media, funding opportunities, tools for sustainable land development and most importantly, new ideas that will strengthen each nature center's identity and ability to make a difference in its community.

The Bicentennial Nature Center Network will play a critical role in helping deed each child in Indiana a parcel of land as part of the Children of Indiana Nature Park, dedicated in summer of 2016. The new park will be physically accessible at Cope Environmental Center and digitally



## Zion Nature Center is OPEN!

Saturdays 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Sundays 12 p.m. – 5 p.m.

*ZCS Winter Break Hours:*

*Wed., Dec 23 & Wed., Dec 30*

*12 p.m. – 5 p.m.*

690 Beech Street Zionsville, IN 46077

(317) 873-8950

[naturecenter@zionsville-in.gov](mailto:naturecenter@zionsville-in.gov)

accessible through an interactive website hosted by The Nature Conservancy. Every child will be able to access their deed, view their parcel of land, and visit the Zion Nature Center in order to experience the curriculum of the Children of Indiana Nature Park.





# Your Backyard: Creekside Nature Park

By Mindy Murdock

Across from Lions Park, on Sycamore Street, sits the 18-acre Creekside Nature Park. The land was donated by Dow AgroSciences in 2001. A Recreational Trails Program grant in the amount of \$62,800 assisted in the development of the park which includes a handicap accessible pathway that loops through the park, and a small parking lot.



The 0.6 mile trail provides plenty of opportunities to view Eagle Creek, as well as providing easy access from Lion's Park. The partially wooded park is home to woodpeckers, squirrels and many different species of tree including one very grand eastern sycamore. Walking close to Eagle Creek keep a watchful eye for bald eagle, kingfishers and in the warmer weather months, heron and turtles.



## Getting to Creekside

- Creekside is located at 11001 East Sycamore Street.
- The park trails is accessible through Lion's Park.
- The park is open sunrise to sunset.
- Leashed dogs are welcome.



# December

Fee: \$2

**Sunday, December 20****Nature Ornaments**

We found the perfect way to catch that holiday spirit. Visit the Zion Nature Center this weekend to make some nature-inspired ornaments. Perfect for gifts, or to decorate your tree and start a new family tradition.

12 p.m. – 5 p.m.

Zion Nature Center

Fee: \$2

**Tuesday, December 22****Winter Solstice Campfire**

December 22 marks the official start of winter and the longest night of the year. Celebrate with an evening stroll under the stars. After our hike we'll warm up with a crackling campfire, hot chocolate and roasting marshmallows.

6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Zion Nature Center

**Wednesday, December 23****Zion Nature Center OPEN**

School is on break, so we've extended our OPEN hours.

12 p.m. – 5 p.m.

Zion Nature Center

**Tuesday, December 29****Winter Nature Camp**

Looking for something to do this Winter Break? Celebrate the season with activities and games focused on animal adaptations. Explore animal tracks, search for their homes and discover what it takes to survive winter. You will be emailed more information upon registration.

Register by December 24 at [naturecenter@zionsville-in.gov](mailto:naturecenter@zionsville-in.gov)

10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Zion Nature Center

Ages: 6 – 12 years

Fee: \$20

**Wednesday, December 30****Zion Nature Center OPEN**

School is on break, so we've extended our OPEN hours.

12 p.m. – 5 p.m.

Zion Nature Center

**January****Saturday, January 9****Coffee with the Birds**

Relax on this crisp winter morning with a cup of coffee and our feathered friends. Coffee is provided, but please bring your favorite mug.

9 a.m. – 10 a.m.

Zion Nature Center

**Thursday, December 31****Noon Year's Eve**

New Year's Eve is a great time to celebrate all we've done and all we will do in the coming year. However, midnight can come too late for young ones, and let's face it, sometimes the adults. Join the Zion Nature Center to celebrate the New Year a little early. Your family can raise a toast with some tasty juice, watch a balloon drop at Noon, and celebrate with Nature Center friends! There's even a chance to make a few resolutions to be a little greener in the New Year. Space is limited so registration is required.

Register at [naturecenter@zionsville-in.gov](mailto:naturecenter@zionsville-in.gov)

11 a.m. – 1p.m.

Zion Nature Center

**Saturday, January 9****Boy Scout Saturday: Environmental Science**

Park Naturalist and merit badge counselor Mindy Murdock will guide you through most of the requirements needed to earn your Environmental Science Merit Badge. Requirements include: History of Environmental Science, environmental terms, endangered species, and ecosystems. Boy Scouts should come prepared with their blue card.

Register at [naturecenter@zionsville-in.gov](mailto:naturecenter@zionsville-in.gov)

1 – 3 p.m.

Zion Nature Center

**Thursday, January 21****Tyke Hike: Squirrels**

Calling all tykes! Today is Squirrel Appreciation Day! Let's celebrate our bushy-tailed neighbors with activities and a craft. Parking is not available at the Zion Nature Center.

Register at [naturecenter@zionsville-in.gov](mailto:naturecenter@zionsville-in.gov)

10 – 11 a.m.

Zion Nature Center

Ages: 3 – 6 years with an adult

**Saturday, January 23****Build Your Own Birdfeeder**

Discover the birds of your backyard with some fun activities. Then decorate your own birdfeeder to attract birds to your backyard this winter.

Register at [naturecenter@zionsville-in.gov](mailto:naturecenter@zionsville-in.gov)

1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Zion Nature Center

Ages: 6 years and up

Fee: \$5

**Saturday, January 30****Birds of Prey**

Zion Nature Center hosts Mark Booth of Take Flight Wildlife Education and his magnificent birds of prey. Hawks, owls, falcons, and other raptors have long held our imagination. See what it's like to be hawk-eyed or falcon-fast by meeting these magnificent predators up close and hearing the stories of our shared history. This program is generously sponsored by the Friends of Zion Nature Center.

1 p.m. – 2 p.m.

Community Room, Zionsville Town Hall

1100 W. Oak Street

Ages: 5 years and up

**February****Saturday, February 13****Coffee with the Birds**

Relax on this crisp winter morning with a cup of coffee and our feathered friends. Coffee is provided, but please bring your favorite mug.

9 a.m. – 10 a.m.

Zion Nature Center

**Saturday, February 14****Great Backyard Bird Count**

In 2013, Great Backyard Bird Count participants in 111 countries documenting 4,258 species—more than one-third of the world's bird species! We invite you to participate! Join the Zion Nature Center as we record the number of bird species around the Nature Center and within the Zion Nature Sanctuary.

1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Zion Nature Center

**Friday, February 19****Animal Adventures: Animal Hiding**

Meet at the Library for story time fun. Afterwards, we will walk to the Zion Nature Center for a scavenger hunt as we discover animal camouflage.

Register at [www.zionsvillelibrary.org](http://www.zionsvillelibrary.org)

10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Hussey-Mayfield Memorial Public Library

Ages: 3 – 6 years with an adult

**Saturday, February 20****Love Your Pet Project**

Today is Love Your Pet Day. Whether you have a dog, cat, snake, fish or more than one...stop in during Zion Nature Center open hours and make a fun craft that celebrates your pet.

10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Zion Nature Center

**Saturday, February 27****Celebrate Snowflakes**

No two are alike! Discover the secrets of snowflakes; how they form, different types of crystals, and how to preserve them so you can view them later by the warmth of the fire. Bring warm clothes in case it snows!

1 p.m. – 2 p.m.

Zion Nature Center

## December 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Project FeederWatch Saturdays & Sundays		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 *Night Tree 6:30 – 8 pm	9	10	11	12 Coffee with the Birds 9 – 10 am
13 Nature Ornaments 12 – 5 pm	14	15	16	17	18	19 Nature Ornaments 10 am – 5 pm
20 Nature Ornaments 12 – 5 pm	21	22 Winter Solstice Campfire 6:30 - 8 pm	23 ZNC OPEN 12 – 5 pm	24	25	26
27	28	29 *Winter Nature Camp 10 am – 2 pm	30 ZNC OPEN 12 – 5 pm	31 *Noon Year's Eve 11 am – 1 pm		

## January 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Project FeederWatch Saturdays & Sundays					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9 Coffee with the Birds 9 – 10 am
10	11	12	13	14	15	*Boy Scout Saturday: Environmental Science 1 – 3 pm
17	18	19	20	21 *Tyke Hike: Squirrels 10 – 11 am	22	23 *Build Your Own Birdfeeder 1 – 3 pm
24 31	25	26	27	28	29	30 Birds of Prey 1 – 2 pm

## February 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Project FeederWatch Saturdays & Sundays	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13 Coffee with the Birds 9 – 10 am
14	15	16	17	18	19 *Animal Adventures 10:30 – 11:30 am	20 Love Your Pet Project 10 am – 5 pm
21	22	23	24	25	26	27 Celebrate Snowflakes 1 – 2 pm
28	29					

\*Program requires registration, see write-up for details or visit [www.zionsville-in.gov/parks](http://www.zionsville-in.gov/parks) for more information